



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Brion Oaks, Chief Equity Officer
Equity Office

Rosie Truelove, Director
Housing and Planning Department

DATE: January 6, 2022

SUBJECT: Release of Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool for Project Connect

We are pleased to announce the completion of the Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool, an essential part of the “Project Connect Contract with Voters” approved November 2020. As you are aware, the passage of Proposition A included \$300 million for displacement prevention, aimed at mitigating potential negative impacts associated with transformative transit investments such as Project Connect. We are excited about the overall benefit Project Connect will have for our entire community and know that this Tool will help us maximize those benefits.

The Tool was developed by community members (referred to as Catalysts) with lived experience of risk for displacement who worked closely with consultants and City of Austin staff. It uses community priorities and data to center racial equity in policy, planning, program, and funding decisions. Specifically, the Tool can help reduce known impacts of transit development, by prioritizing investments in anti-displacement strategies to stabilize renters, homeowners, small businesses, and cultural anchors/organizations. It uses a community lens in a set of questions designed to evaluate policies and programs. The accompanying [Nothing About Us Without Us report](#) and [map series](#) lay out the vision and purpose of the Tool, describe how it was developed, demonstrate where it applies, and provide examples of how it can be implemented.

The [Nothing About Us Without Us](#) report will serve as an aspirational document for City of Austin staff who seek to use it as a framework for grounding equity in future projects. Housing and Planning staff are working with the Law and the Purchasing departments, to structure an implementation plan, that will use the vision created by the Catalysts in a way that is legally compliant with federal law purchasing standards for municipalities in the state of Texas. Legal staff are planning an executive session briefing to discuss this issue in more detail. Housing and Planning staff anticipate sharing the Implementation Plan, including

neighborhood level strategies, and budget priorities for the Project Connect Anti-Displacement dollars with council in February of 2022, either by briefing or memo.

The cross departmental team of City of Austin staff, including: Housing and Planning, Equity Office, Project Connect Office, Innovation Office, and Economic Development that were assembled to develop the tool are continuing to move the Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool for Project Connect into production. In the coming months, City staff will host learning sessions for the community to become familiar with the Tool - as well as sharing the report with internal city stakeholders.

As the Tool is implemented, we will prioritize its continuous improvement. Changes to the Tool will be informed by feedback from the Catalysts, City of Austin staff, as well as the decision-makers and community members who use it. A link to sign up for learning sessions can be found at: <https://bit.ly/AntiDisplacementLearningSessions>.

Should you have questions about the Tool, please contact Brion Oaks, City of Austin Chief Equity Officer, at brion.oaks@austintexas.gov. Should you have questions about how the tool will be used for Project Connect and the anti-displacement investments, please contact Nefertitti Jackmon, City of Austin Community Displacement Prevention Officer, at nefertitti.jackmon@austintexas.gov, or Rosie Truelove, City of Austin Housing and Planning Director, at rosie.truelove@austintexas.gov.

The City of Austin staff would like to express their sincere thanks the Catalysts for directing their time and energy towards the *Nothing About us Without Us* report. Their work is meaningful and will be impactful to the residents of Austin.

CC: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Anne Morgan, Interim Deputy City Manager
Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager
Nefertitti Jackmon, Community Displacement Prevention Officer